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### Raul Allegre: From Water Towers to Goal Posts

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RAUL ALLEGRE: FROM WATER  
TOWERS TO GOAL POSTS  
guffey/wb

by  
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MISSOULA--

Raul Allegre, a sophomore on the University of Montana football team, was a foreign exchange student at Shelton High School in Washington when the Grizzly coaches first heard about him.

The 5-10, 165-pounder is from Torreon, Mexico, where his father works as a civil engineer, a field Allegre plans to pursue. A 4.0 student as a prep, Allegre is trilingual and majors in Physics and Math at UM.

With the recent start of spring practice at the University, Allegre has been working hard at his specialty -- kicking the ball between the goal posts.

He was successful last year in his initial collegiate season, connecting on 11 of 15 field goals and 18 of 20 PATS.

That success was somewhat of a pleasant surprise for the Grizzly coaches, considering Allegre had only been kicking a football, instead of his favorite, a soccer ball, for only a year.

"A friend of mine, Jack Stark, was coaching Raul (pronounced RAH-00L) in high school," recalled Pokey Allen, UM's defensive coordinator. "He told me about Raul in the spring, and said he looked like a prospect."

"As time went on," continued Allen, "Jack would call me up and tell me the kid was really improving. He began comparing Raul to Dave Cutler, a former kicker Jack and I coached at Simon Fraser University. Cutler is one of the top kickers in Canadian Football, so I started to listen a little more carefully."



RAUL ALLEGRE: FROM WATER TOWERS TO GOAL POSTS

Allen said his former coaching colleague sent him some film of Allegre kicking, "and he kicked three-of-five from 60 yards out, so we offered him a scholarship."

It's a decision neither party regrets.

Allegre had already returned to Mexico and enrolled in a University there, when he heard about the scholarship offer.

"My parents encouraged me to come (to UM)," he said. "They didn't like the idea of me being so far away from home, but thought it was the best thing for me. (His parents have never seen him play). I really like it here."

As a prep he was three-of-five kicking field goals, with his longest a 42-yarder. Considering it was only his second year, last season's 11 three-pointers were quite a feat.

"I was pretty pleased with the season I had," said Allegre in between kicks at a recent practice session. "I was disappointed in the way we started the season (losing three straight), but thought we did very well in conference. (Montana was 5-6 overall and 4-2 in the Big Sky Conference, which tied them for second place). It took us a while to get together as a team. After the first couple of games we had adjusted well."

Allegre, who will be 20 years old this June, said the hardest part about kicking a football is, "watching the ball when you kick. In soccer you aren't supposed to. It's more automatic."

He has to play a lot of soccer at home in summer to stay in shape for football, and his training regime for football must be quite a sight to the locals.

"There is a water tower by my home, and I practice by kicking at it," he said. "There are a couple of schools around the area, but they are closed, and I don't know if I'll be able to use them (the goal posts) or not."

After finishing ranked among the Division 1-AA schools in field goal kicking, it's hard to argue with his unorthodox style of working out. Not only does he have any choice--but the results are very hard to argue with.